

REMARKS

Claims 2, 3, 5-21, 38-44, 60-63, 65-69, 71-83, 86-88, and 99-115 are pending, with claims 60, 77, 81, 99, 108, and 109 being independent. Claims 1, 4, 22-37, 45-59, 64, 70, 84, 85, and 89-98 have been cancelled. Claims 15 and 99 have been amended and claims 109-115 have been added. No new subject matter has been introduced.

35 U.S.C. § 112 Rejections

Claim 15 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112(2) as being unclear. Applicants have amended claim 15 for clarification. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the 35 U.S.C. § 112(2) rejection is respectfully requested.

35 U.S.C. § 103(a) Rejections

Claims 2, 5, 6, 8-12, 14, 18-20, 38, 41, 42, 60-62, 65-68, 72, 73, 77, 81-83, 86, 99, 100, 102, 103, and 108 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over U.S. Patent No. 6,425,012 (Trovato) in view of U.S. Patent No. 7,035,926 (Cohen).

Turning to independent claim 99, applicants request reconsideration and withdrawal of the Trovato in view Cohen rejection as neither of the references, alone or in any valid combination, describe or suggest “analyzing the online context of the user, the online context of the other users, and the accessed contact list for the user that identifies one or more of the other users as contacts of the user” or “based on the analysis, identifying a group of the other users sharing the online context who are contacts of the user, the number of users in the group of the other users being less than the number of the other users,” as recited by amended independent claim 99.

Trovato is directed to providing an appropriate chat room to a user requesting access to a chat session. *See* Trovato, abstract. In selecting a particular chat room, Trovato considers “recent chat rooms having users with similar context profiles” (step 440) and “recent chat rooms having users with similar compatible preferences” (step 450). *See* Trovato, Fig. 4. Nowhere,

however, does Trovato describe or suggest analysis of a user's contact list in its provision of a chat room. Moreover, nowhere does Trovato describe or suggest identifying a group of users sharing an online context who are contacts of the user.

Cohen is directed to monitoring web-activities based on an identification of users accessing resources. *See* Cohen, abstract. For example, Cohen describes the notification of users accessing websites. *See e.g.*, Cohen, column 1, lines 35-40. Cohen, like Trovato, does not describe or suggest analysis of a user's contact list in its notification of users. Similarly, Cohen does not describe or suggest identifying a group of users sharing an online context who are contacts of the user.

Therefore, neither reference, alone or in any valid combination, describes or suggests "analyzing the online context of the user, the online context of the other users, and the accessed contact list for the user that identifies one or more of the other users as contacts of the user" or "based on the analysis, identifying a group of the other users sharing the online context who are contacts of the user, the number of users in the group of the other users being less than the number of the other users," as recited by amended independent claim 99.

Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) rejections of independent claim 99 and its dependent claims is respectfully requested.

The remaining dependent claims are each rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) in view of Trovato, Cohen, and other references cited with respect to features of the dependent claims. None of the other references overcome the deficiencies of Trovato in view of Cohen in describing or suggesting the independent claims as noted above. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) rejections of the remaining dependent claims is respectfully requested.

New Claims

New independent claim 109 is allowable over the references of record at least because none of the references, alone or in any proper combination, describe or suggest "based on the determination that the second buddy user has requested one or more of the one or more files

requested by the first buddy user, determining whether the one or more on-line traits associated with the first user correspond to the one or more on-line traits associated with the second buddy user; and sending an identification of the second buddy user to the first buddy user when the one or more on-line traits associated with the first buddy user correspond to the one or more on-line traits associated with the second buddy user.”

Accordingly, new claim 109 and its dependent claims are allowable over the references of record.

Conclusion

It is believed that all of the pending issues have been addressed. However, the absence of a reply to a specific rejection, issue or comment does not signify agreement with or concession of that rejection, issue or comment. In addition, because the arguments made above may not be exhaustive, there may be reasons for patentability of any or all pending claims (or other claims) that have not been expressed. Finally, nothing in this reply should be construed as an intent to concede any issue with regard to any claim, except as specifically stated in this reply, and the amendment of any claim does not necessarily signify concession of unpatentability of the claim prior to its amendment.

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Respectfully submitted,

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